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The Dean of St. *PAUL*'s SERMON AT THE TEMPLE-CHURCH, DECEMBER 30. 1694.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

TEMPLE-CHURCH,

DECEMBER 30. 1694.

Upon the SAD OCCASION of the

DEATH

OF OUR

Gracious Queen.

Mary II

And Publiſhed at the Earneſt Requeſt of Several MASTERS of the BENCH of Both Societies.

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D. Dean of St. *Paul*'s, Maſter of the *Temple*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

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XXXIX. Psalm 9.

I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didſt it.

THIS may be thought a very improper Text for the Feaſt of our Saviour's Birth, when our Mouths ought to be filled with the Praiſes of God, and ſing with the whole Quire of Angels, *Glory be to God in the higheſt, on earth peace, good will towards men.* This indeed is that Peace, which the World cannot give, and which the World cannot take away; whatever the External Appearances of Providence are,

here we find a ſafe retreat, and a never-failing Spring of Joy: For *he that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things? Who* then *ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall Tribulation, or Diſtreſs, or Perſecution, or Famine, or Nakedneſs, or Peril, or Sword?* ——— *Nay, in all theſe we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us. For I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord,* 8. Rom. 32, 35, 37, *&c.* While our minds are warmed with ſuch thoughts as theſe, we ſhall be able to bear up under the greateſt Trials, if not with Chearfulneſs, yet at leaſt with Pati-

ence and a quiet Submiſſion to the Will of God. And if ever there were occaſion for ſuch Comfortable and Supporting Thoughts, the Divine Providence has made it too neceſſary at this time, to bear the Loſs of an Incomparable Lady, our moſt Gracious Queen; whoſe Death all good Subjects muſt Lament, and I pray God forgive thoſe that do not. Such ſevere Providences as theſe, will teach the greateſt and moſt unbroken Minds, *to ſerve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice with trembling.* But how ſevere ſoever Providence is in ſome particular inſtances, the ſenſe of the Divine Goodneſs in the Redemption of Mankind by the Incarnation and Death of his own Son, ſhould teach us to be *dumb, and not open our mouths, becauſe it is his doings.*

In ſpeaking to which words, I ſhall

1. Inquire, What may be called the doings

doings of the Lord? 2. What it is to be dumb, and not to open our Mouths? 3. The force of this Argument to oblige us to a quiet and patient Submiſſion under the greateſt ſufferings, That it is God's doing.

1. What may be called *the doing of the Lord*? This may be thought a very needleſs queſtion; for are there any Events, Good or Evil, which are not God's doing? If we believe a particular Providence, we muſt anſwer, No; and yet ſome things are more peculiarly God's doings, than others are, with reſpect to this preſent Argument, as God's doing it, is a reaſon for a quiet and patient Submiſſion to the Divine Will.

In many caſes men bring Ruine and Miſery upon themſelves by their own ſin and folly, and then they may thank themſelves for it; but have no reaſon

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to complain of Providence; and when they cannot charge Providence with their misfortunes, patience it ſelf is not properly a Submiſſion to God; becauſe their ſufferings are no more God's will, than their ſin and folly is.

If men deſtroy their Eſtates by profuſeneſs and prodigality, and their Bodies by intemperance and luſt; if ill-contracted Friendſhips, indiſcreet Bargains, or an ungovernable Tongue, perplex their Affairs, and prove very troubleſome or dangerous, all this is owing not merely to Providence, but to themſelves; and they muſt be contented to reap the fruit of their own doings, and to implore the Divine Goodneſs and Providence to deliver them from the evil conſequences of their own ſin and folly.

Whatever evils we ſuffer, which are not the natural or moral effects of our own ſin or folly, they are properly God's do-

ings, as inflicted by God, either for the puniſhment of our ſins, or for the trial and exerciſe of our virtues, or to ſerve the wiſe ends of his Providence in the world.

Thoſe Evils which we do not immediately bring upon our ſelves, God inflicts on us, either by the miniſtry of wicked and injurious men, or by the diſorders of Natural Cauſes, or by ſome ſeeming caſual and fortuitous Events; for the Actions of Men, the Powers of Nature, and what we call Chance and Fortune, are all in the hands of God, and therefore are more or leſs his doings.

But if we may ſay, that ſome things are more peculiarly the care of Providence, than others, Life and Death are certainly ſo; no man can be Born or Die, without the particular Order and Appointment of God: Our Saviour tells

tells us, *not a ſparrow falls to the ground without our Father*, much leſs men; and aſſures his Diſciples, that *all the hairs of their head are numbred*; and their Lives are more ſacred than their Hairs. Some men are of opinion, That God has abſolutely Decreed the certain term and period of every man's life; But I know no foundation for this, neither in Scripture nor Reaſon; nor does any man believe it, but thoſe who ſubject all Mankind, and all the Things of this world, to irreverſible Neceſſity and Fate, which is the ſtrength of the Atheiſtick Hypotheſis; though incautiouſly eſpouſed by ſome men, who are ſo far from being Atheiſts, that I hope they are very good Chriſtians. And therefore, I ſuppoſe, theſe Chriſtian Fataliſts, if I may ſo call them, mean no more than what we all own, That no Sparrow, much leſs a Man, falls to the ground without our Father; that God

not only foreknows the period of every man's Life, and by what means he ſhall Die, but with infinite Wiſdom and Juſtice, Orders and Appoints it; not by an abſolute and unconditional Decree, but as the Wiſe Determination of a Free and Juſt Providence.

And if God have any more concernment for Nations and Commonwealths, than he has for particular men (as we, who can attend but a few things at once, and therefore make the matters of greateſt importance our more particular care, are apt to conceive) then the Lives and Deaths of Princes muſt be more particularly Ordered and Determined by God; becauſe Nations, it may be many Nations and Countries, more than their own, are concerned in the conſequence of it; and of the more univerſal concernment

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any thing is, the more we are apt to think it belongs to the Care of God.

For this reaſon ſome Philoſophers have confined the Providence of God to the Heavens, and Heavenly Bodies, which have ſuch a univerſal influence on things below; or to Nations and Publick Societies, and to the ſeveral kinds and ſpecies of Beings, not to particular Men or Creatures.

And ſo far they were in the right, that if the Divine Providence could not equally take care of the whole World, and of every particular Creature in it; it would certainly in the firſt place take care of the great Springs of motion. But though this be no reaſon for God's peculiar care of one thing more than another, becauſe his All-ſeeing Eye, and Almighty Arm, can equally take care of all; yet our Saviour has taught

taught us from the worth and value of things, that God will certainly take the more care of them, and in caſe of any Competition give the preference to things of the greateſt moment. *Behold the fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they?* And *if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?* 6. Matth. 26, 30. Where from God's care of mean Inferior Creatures, the Fowls of the Air, and the Graſs of the Field, he more ſtrongly concludes his care of Men; and by the ſame reaſon from his care of particular men, we may more ſtrongly conclude his care of Kingdoms and Nations, and therefore of the Lives of Princes, who are the great Miniſters of his

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Government and Providence, and whoſe Lives or Deaths make ſuch a mighty Change in the Affairs of the world. So that when, or by what means ſoever Princes dye, this is God's doings; and how ſevere ſoever we may feel it, *We muſt be dumb, and not open our mouths, becauſe he has done it*; which is the

2. Thing to be explained, What is meant by being *dumb, and not opening our mouths.* For this ſeems a very hard ſaying in the ſtrict literal ſenſe, that we muſt not complain of our Sufferings, when we feel 'em ſmart: Humane Nature can't bear this, we muſt feel our Sufferings, and when we feel them, we muſt complain: To have no ſenſe of what we ſuffer, is Stupidity, not Submiſſion; it is irreverence for the Judgments of God, and in ſome caſes the moſt unpardonable

pardonable baſeneſs and ingratitude to Men. To be unconcerned for the Death of our deareſt Friends, or greateſt Patrons and Benefactors, not to pay Natures Tribute to their Memories in a Sigh and a Tear; not to long after them, and ſend ſome vain Wiſhes to call them back; not to preſerve their Idea freſh in our minds, and to think with ſome uneaſineſs of thoſe happy hours which their Converſation ſweetned; to part with our Friends, as if we ſuffered nothing by their loſs, and were as well without them, is ſo far from being a Virtue, that ſuch a man is uncapable of ever being a Friend, and never deſerves to have any; much more then, when we loſe a Publick Friend and Benefactor, the greateſt of Friends and Benefactors, which is a good Prince.

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Let us briefly conſider, what we have loſt in the loſs of our Gracious Queen, and try if we can bear the thoughts of it without complaining. She was the Glory of her Sex, and an Ornament to the Crown ſhe wore; made truly Great by Nature, Birth, and Education. She had a large and capacious Mind, a quick and lively Apprehenſion, and a piercing and ſolid Judgment: She had a ſtrength and firmneſs of Mind beyond her Sex, and ſuch a dexterity in managing the greateſt Affairs, as would have become the greateſt and moſt experienced Miniſters. Never was there greater skill in Government with leſs fondneſs for it, which ſhe could take up and lay down, with the ſame equality and indifferency of Mind: Though, I doubt, I muſt unſay that; for ſhe was always grieved at the occaſion of taking the Government, and as glad to reſign it.

Never was Majeſty better tempered with eaſineſs and ſweetneſs. She knew how to be familiar, without making her ſelf cheap, and to condeſcend without meanneſs. She had all the Greatneſs of Majeſty, with all the Vertues of Converſation; and knew very well, what became her Table, and what became the Council-Board.

She underſtood her Religion, and loved it, and practiſed it; and was the greateſt Example of the Age, of a conſtant, regular, unaffected Devotion, and of all the eminent Vertues of a *Chriſtian Life*. In the midſt of all the great *Affairs* of *State*, ſhe would rather ſpare time from her ſleep, than from her Prayers, where ſhe always appeared with that great compoſure and ſerioufneſs of Mind, as if her Court had been a Nunnery, and ſhe had had nothing elſe to do in the World.

In all the Eaſe and Proſperity of Fortune ſhe had that tenderneſs and compaſſion for thoſe, who ſuffered, which ſufferings themſelves cannot teach meaner Perſons. She was Charitable to the utmoſt of her Power, amidſt all the Expences of War and Government, and when a proper Object was preſented to her, was always pleaſed, when ſhe could grant their requeſts, and very uneaſie to deny.

In ſhort, her greateſt and moſt implacable Enemies, (for Vertue it ſelf will meet with Enemies in this World) had no other Fault to charge her with, but her Throne; which is the only thing, for which moſt other Princes are valuable. She aſcended the Throne indeed before ſhe deſired it, but was thruſt into it, not by an haſty Ambition, but to ſave a ſinking Church and Kingdom: And I hope *England* will always have reaſon to ſay, That

an empty Throne could never have been filled with a nobler Pair.

But though the neceſſary abſence of the King, to give check to the Progreſs of a powerful and inſulting Monarch, engaged her more than ſhe deſired in *State Affairs*, yet the promoting of true Religion, and the ſervice of the Church of *England*, [the greateſt and beſt Nurſery of it, ſince the Apoſtolick Age,] was her conſtant and natural Care. This her Thoughts were full of, and ſhe had formed great and noble Deſigns, had ſhe out-lived the Difficulties and Expences of War; and been at leiſure to attend the peaceful Arts of Government.

I have reaſon to ſay this, from thoſe frequent Intimations I have had from our late admirable Primate, who had great Deſigns Himſelf to ſerve the *Chriſtian Religion*, and the *Church* of *England*, in its trueſt Intereſts; and had

had inſpired Their Majeſties; and particularly the Queen, who had more leiſure for ſuch Thoughts, with the ſame great and pious Deſigns: It may be no Church-man ever had, I am ſure not more deſervedly, a greater Intereſt in his Prince's Favour; and the great Uſe he made of it, was to do publick ſervice to Religion; and, whatever ſome Men might ſuſpect, to the *Church* of *England*, though it may be not perfectly in their Way: And the greateſt Fault I know he had, was, That ſome envious and ambitious Men could not bear his Greatneſs, which he himſelf never courted, nay, which he induſtriouſly avoided.

Before this, all *England* knew and owned his Worth; and had it been put to the Poll, there had been vaſt Odds on his ſide, that he would have been voted into the See of *Canterbury*; for no Man had ever a clearer and brighter Reaſon,

ſon, a truer Judgment, a more eaſie and happy Expreſſion, nor a more inflexible, fearleſs Honeſty: He was a true and hearty Friend, and was a true Friend where-ever he profeſſed to be ſo: Though he had many Enemies at laſt, he took care to make none. He was obliging to all Men; and though he could not eaſily part with a Friend, he could eaſily forgive an Enemy, as that Bundel of Libels witneſſes, which was found among his other Papers, with this Inſcription: *Theſe are Libels; I pray God forgive them; I do.*

But I cannot give you the juſt Character of this Great Man now; what I have already ſaid, I confeſs, is an Excurſion, which I hope you will pardon to the Paſſion of an old Friend; and learn from Two great Examples, that neither the greateſt Innocence, Vertue, or Merit, can defend, either Crowned or Mitred

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Heads, from the laſh of ſpiteful and envenomed Tongues. But what a Loſs has *Religion* and the *Church* of *England*, in ſuch a critical Time, in the Death of ſuch a *Queen*, and ſuch a *Prelate*! I pray God make up this Loſs.

In a word, That great Paſſion which afflicts and oppreſſes our good King, gives an unexceptionable Teſtimony to the incomparable Worth of our deceaſed *Queen*: The too ſevere and viſible Effects of it, ſhew, that it is not an ordinary, nor a diſſembled Paſſion: Nor is it an ordinary thing, for a Prince of ſo great a Mind, who can look the moſt formidable Dangers, and Death it ſelf, in the face, without fear; whom all the Powers of *France* cannot make look pale or tremble, to ſink and faint, and to feel all the Agonies of Death in the dying Looks of a Beloved Conſort. All Story cannot furniſh us with many Examples of ſuch ſoft and

tender Paſſions, in ſuch a warlike and fearleſs Mind; and what but a mighty Vertue could ſo charm a Prince, as to forget his natural Conſtancy and Reſolution? I'm ſure, though we pay very dear for the Experiment in the loſs of an excellent *Queen*, we have ſo much the more reaſon to think our ſelves happy in a *King*; for a due mixture and temperament of ſuch fearleſs Courage and Bravery, and ſuch tender Paſſions, is the moſt perfect Compoſition of an excellent Prince.

And now it may be, you will tell me, that I have taken great Pains to confute my Text, and that I have done it effectually; for we ought not to be dumb, but may very juſtly complain of ſuch a loſs as this.

This I readily grant, That we may complain of ſuch a loſs; but this is no confutation of my Text. We may complain,

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and give Eaſe and Vent to our Sorrows by ſuch Complaints, while we do not complain againſt God, and accuſe him fooliſhly. To ſubmit to the Will of God, which is here expreſt by being *Dumb, and not opening our Mouths*, does not ſignifie, not to feel our Loſſes and Sufferings, or not to complain of them; but not to reproach the Divine Providence, nor to caſt off our Hope and Truſt in God. *Job* felt his Sufferings, and complained of them in as moving and tragical Expreſſions, as any other Man could, and yet is propoſed to us, as an Example of admirable Patience, becauſe he did not *charge God fooliſhly*, nor caſt off his Hope in him.

This we never can have any reaſon for; for whatever we ſuffer, it is a wiſe and merciful Providence which inflicts it: But yet Mankind are very apt, when they ſuffer hard things, either to deny a Pro-

vidence, or which is more abſurd, and unreaſonable, to reproach it; for if there be a God, he is Wiſe, and Good, and Merciful, and Juſt, which is the Notion all Mankind have of God; and if this God governs the World, all Events are ordered with Wiſdom, Juſtice, and Goodneſs; and all thinking Men, in cool and ſober Thoughts, will be aſhamed to quarrel with ſuch a Providence.

But yet we are very apt to ask Queſtions, which we cannot eaſily anſwer, and then to make our own Ignorance an Objection againſt the Divine Providence.

As in the Caſe before us, the ſudden and untimely Death of an excellent Princeſs, who had Strength and Vigour of Age, which promiſed a much longer Life, and who would certainly have done great Good to the World, as long as ſhe had lived; but is cut off in the Vigour and Strength of Age, and all her Thoughts, even

even all her great and excellent Deſigns of doing Good to the World, periſh with her; while Tyrants and Oppreſſors live to be the Plagues and Scourges of Mankind.

Now though we do not know the particular Reaſons of ſuch Providences, yet it is eaſie to frame ſome general Anſwers, which may ſatisfie all the Friends of Providence.

If the Objection relates to our ſelves, who ſuffer by this loſs, there is a very plain Anſwer to it, but a very terrible one; That God is Angry with us, and by the untimely Death of an excellent Princeſs, who made it her whole Study and Deſign to do us Good, threatens his Judgments againſt us, if we do not take Care to prevent them by a timely Repentance.

If the Objection relates only to the untimely Death of an excellent Princeſs,

that ſhe ſhould ſo ſuddenly be ſnatched away from the Joys and Pleaſures of a Throne; this is no Objection at all; at leaſt not an Objection fit for Chriſtians to make: For can we think, that the greateſt and moſt happy Monarch, loſes any thing by the Exchange, if he be tranſlated from Earth to Heaven? That the Joys of Paradiſe are not greater than a Crown? Our good *Queen* did not think ſo, who knew what an Earthly Crown meant, but was willing to part with it for Heaven; who ſaw Death approaching without fear, and prepared to receive its Stroke with that calmneſs and ſedateneſs of Mind, as nothing could give but an innocent Conſcience, and much greater Hopes.

But as for our ſelves, though we muſt acknowledge that we have received a very great Loſs, in the Death of an excellent *Queen*, yet we have no reaſon to quar-

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rel at Providence, while God preſerves our King to go in and out before us. We had indeed perpetual Day; and no ſooner was one Sun withdrawn, but another aſcended our Horizon, with equal Luſtre and Brightneſs: This was a peculiar Happineſs which we never had before, and which the Neceſſity of our Affairs required now; but though God has cut us ſhort in this, we have a King ſtill, the Terror of *France*, and the Protector of *Europe*; a King, whom Affection as well as Blood has Naturalized to us; who loves our Nation and our Church, which he has once delivered, and God grant he may live long to ſettle and protect both. We have no reaſon to fear our Enemies, either at home or abroad, while a Prince is at the Helm, who wants neither Counſel nor Courage; eſpecially if we follow that noble Example, which the Two Houſes of Parliament have ſet

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us, to give him ſuch freſh Aſſurances of our Fidelity, as may ſtrengthen his Hands againſt his and our Enemies Abroad, and make him eaſie and ſafe at Home.

To conclude, This is God's doing, and it becomes us to be dumb, and not to open our Mouthes, becauſe he has done it: He is the Sovereign and Unaccountable Lord of the World; who ſhall ſay unto him, What doſt thou? Life and Death are in his Hands; the Fates of Princes and Kingdoms. That he has done it, ſhould be a ſufficient reaſon to us to ſubmit, becauſe though he does things great and wonderful, and beyond our Underſtanding, yet he never does any thing but what is wiſe and good: This I'm ſure is the moſt effectual way to turn even the ſevereſt Judgments into Bleſſings, to reverence God, and to humble our ſelves under his mighty Hand, and to implore

his

his Mercy, to repair thoſe Breaches he has made upon us. We muſt not complain of Providence; but we may make our Complaints to God, and be the more importunate in our Prayers for the Preſervation of our King. The Death of our excellent Queen both calls for, and will juſtifie and recommend ſuch humble Importunities; and the Preſervation of our King, will, in a great meaſure, make up this Loſs to us; *Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, be Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for ever,* Amen.

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